P06 / The Future of Government after the covid-19: democracy, governance and public management challenges in Latin America

Topic : OTHER

Chair : Florencia Ferrer (e-Strategia Publica)

Second Chair : Silverio Zebral Filho (OAS School of Governance)

Third Chair : Luciano Andrenacci (Universidad Nacional de General San Martín)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This panel is organized by the OAS School of Governance and addresses how COVID 19 forcibly placed us in a huge global proof of concept.

Due to the pressure from external imposition, the digital transformation became condition of existence of a new reality. The use of video conferencing by public administrators, for example, showed that change was possible and that nothing more than a push was needed. Citizens and companies were ready for all interactions to be digital. This proves that crises are the best time to push us to make hard decisions and think about the future: the opportunity to radically transform the state, to reinvent it, to refound it. We need to meet the demands of the citizen of the SXXI, among which are the demands of another type of democracy.

Mobilizations of discontent are dragging around the world from the Arab Spring, to the 15th M de Madrid, Occupy Wall Street. Citizens who do not feel represented by the State were already occupying the streets and staging waves of collective indignation. The murder of George Floyd sparked a new wave of outrage in 2020. Only After the population expressed itself emphatically, the government took disruptive actions: disassociating all members of the police force and starting from scratch.

Why not to lead the transformation of the State in a disruptive way and think urgently about how to expand citizen participation in decision-making, construction, monitoring and supervision of the State?

We don’t need to continue to bear the brutal costs of inertial rigid structures, by whim or for corporate protection of positions and salaries.

The crisis of the State is not the effect of a conjuncture, but of a historical accumulation of wrong decisions made along the decades. In the last 8 years, public spending increased three times more than the population growth and much more than GDP increase.

In the private sector, the price of goods and services falls while quality improves, driven by the market's own competitiveness. In the public sector, there is an absolute and relative increase in the prices of services, which makes the equation untenable.

If the state is committed to maintaining the past, how does it think and execute innovative public policies? In general, it does not.

To grow, companies need to reinvent themselves every day. Even elderly people had to learn how to use Zoom in order to participate in birthday celebrations during pandemic. To serve the citizens, the State must do the same. The digital transformation of the State is an issue of the highest political priority. It's not a technology issue.

The institutional reinvention of the state may be difficult, but what is the alternative? To continue to suffer from an inefficient, costly and ineffective State?

This paper aims to expose the advances that took place in the years of the pandemic in solutions for citizen participation, social control, service delivery and increase of democratic capillarity, which shows that it is possible to react to the crisis of the contemporary democracies.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We would like to recieve investigations from Latin America. Papers will be used at OAS School of Governance.

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Session 1

Wednesday, June 28th 15:50 to 17:50 (JOR440)

(Virtual) Citizens' perceptions of quality and accessibility of local government services: Pathways to institutional change in a post-COVID era

ERIS SCHOBURGH (THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, MONA CAMPUS)

Sonia Gatchair (University of the West Indies, Mona)

Local government is closest to the citizenry and therefore the current socio-economic context has implications for its relevance to the lives of citizens, especially in small-island developing states (SIDs) where central government takes the lead in mitigating existential threats. The general shift in citizens' attitude from acquiescence to public service delivery norms of the pre-COVID 19 period, to stridently vocalizing new sets of preferences is gaining ground and is the focus of enquiry in this research, that seeks to find out how citizens feel about the quality of, and access to, the services provided by their local authority.

The research uses qualitative methods and thus data collection is facilitated through a telephone survey of a sample of residents across the fifteen municipalities in Jamaica. This data is further augmented by desk analysis of relevant articles in leading newspapers concerned with the quality of services provided by local authorities. The study found that there is a high level of dissatisfaction with services delivery at the municipal level but the organization enjoys a degree of legitimacy; that digital transformation of local government operations geared towards improving the quality of municipal services delivery and increasing citizens' access to these services is an expressed preference. The study develops a resilience services model that is integrative in character as the appropriate modality for local services delivery in a post-COVID era as it has the potential to transform thinking about municipal services provision.

Argentina's Covid19 Emergency Campaign (2020-2021) Under a Public Management Working-Phenomena Perspective

Luciano Andrenacci (Universidad Nacional de General San Martín)

State responses to Covid19 (2020-2021) can be regarded as archetypal public emergency campaigns, through which public organizations and/or interventions were put together in emergency contexts, and gradually adjusted to their results and impacts. The rapidly evolving, open-ended worldwide catastrophe provided an unusually transparent, possibly unique opportunity to explore how states create and manage public policy, and to compare them with a set of generalizable criteria (damage control, financial stability of states, political stability of governments).

This paper presents the case of Argentina: a developing country with a federal regime undergoing severe financial limitations, governed by an unstable political coalition within a polarized democratic polity, and yet producing a surprisingly adequate emergency response, albeit only (or mostly) in the first phase of the emergency. Using a public management analysis model derived from Michael Barzelay's working phenomena perspective (2019) we provide a case narrative and analysis describing and presenting provisory explanations of Argentina's Covid19 campaign as an initially successful (2020), then stability-losing "functioning-whole" (2021).

The federal state intervention made outcomes fit intent through ingenious and adequate management in the first phase. In spite of dire financial and political straits, a smart approach (damage control) was made to

work by simple strategies (local adaptation of successful national campaigns, rapid emergency deployment and open political negotiation), relatively limiting the number of deaths in the first phase of the campaign. A growingly complex context and possibly inadequate decision-making made it lose grip of the artifact, although, ultimately, the outcome-intent relationship can be argued to have been comparatively positive.

We believe this effort to be interesting both as case study and as a developing method for further comparative use.

Promoting development in a risk society: why Public Intelligence based instruments should be adopted in the Post-Covid Scenario

Lara Laranja (Universidade de Brasília)

Ana Paula Antunes Martins (University of Brasília)

Lucio Magda (University of Brasilia)

The COVID-19 pandemic is a unique and global event, which required the joint effort of States, private sector and civil society to avoid a tragedy greater than the one that happened, adding up to more than millions of deaths and hundreds of millions of cases. The pandemic is not an important point only for health policies, but for the production of better ways to develop governments, preventing exposure to the risks inherent in modern societies – as described by Ulrich Beck – and demanding increasingly faster and more effective responses to the solution of problems.

Although many countries are committed to agendas of global concern, such as through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the pandemic has streamlined certain demands and forced previously unaddressed agendas to be duly noted. In the Global South, and especially in Latin America, providing equanimous and good pandemic response was compromised by the 'social commodities', such as social economic and territorial inequality, poverty, informal workers, and bad sanitary infrastructure. In this way, the pandemic is consolidated as a turning point in management, governance, and public policies. It is a clear watershed when it comes to public services, suggesting a great power of flexibility and adaptability to new situations, extremely important in the age of inconsistency and uncertainty.

To say that the pandemic is an inflection point is to say that the situation that started in 2020, when the establishment of the pandemic framework was announced, revealed situations that were previously little known to general knowledge and that require effective responses from the public authorities. Obviously, the public sector that has faced the most challenges and has been in the spotlight the most has been health. After three years of the troubled period that began with the pandemic, new reflections on how governments can better structure themselves to manage risk situations prove to be an important way to build this field of study.

Therefore, this article articulates the emerging concept of Public Intelligence on the conceptualization of management instruments as an alternative to rehabilitate public management and governance. Public Intelligence brings a series of concerns that deal with technologies, technopolitics and governance, in opposition to Business Intelligence as a widespread method for public management. Public Intelligence can be understood as a theoretical construct that qualifies and makes governance concrete, adding memory, public management and specific field practices, theoretical foundations, and experience. While the traditional concepts of governance use State's crises to operate, Public Intelligence encompasses risk society as a diagnosis. It aims to provide managers with the information that is necessary for decision making. To Latin American countries, it represents a new emancipatory theoretical-methodological approach, developed from the needs of the global south context, and not based on theories of development coming from the north or on prescriptive models that are not very flexible, often presented by international organizations. This exploratory research objective is to introduce management instruments based on Public Intelligence to improve public management and governance, interested in promoting a development project.

The impact of COVID-19 on the acceleration of digital transformation, transparency and democratization of the public sector.

Florencia Ferrer (e-Strategia Publica)

Silverio Zebral Filho (OAS School of Governance)

COVID 19 forcibly placed us in a huge global proof of concept. Due to the pressure of external imposition, existence and digital transformation became a condition for the existence of a new reality.

The use of video conferencing by public administrators, for example, demonstrated that change was possible and that no more than a push was needed. The citizen and companies were already ready for all

interactions to be digital.

The crisis is the best time to push us to make hard decisions and think about the future. This is the opportunity to radically transform the state, to reinvent it, to refound it. We need to attend to the demands of the citizen of the SXXI, among which are the demands of another type of democracy, not only plebiscitary, in which a government is referred or not in the elections.

Mobilizations of discontent are dragging around the world from the Arab Spring, to Madrid's 15 M, Occupy Wall Street. Citizens who do not feel represented by the State were already occupying the streets and staging waves of collective indignation.

The murder of George Floyd sparked a new wave of outrage in 2020. It was only after the population expressed itself emphatically that the government took disruptive measures: it disassociated all members of the police force and started from scratch.

Instead of expecting new waves of outrage in the face of inequality caused by secure public employees in their jobs and poor public services, why not lead the transformation of the state, in a disruptive way? Why not think urgently about how to expand citizen participation in the decision, construction, monitoring and supervision of the State?

Today it is difficult to think of any space in our lives that is not regulated by the State. She's an omnipresent babysitter who takes care of even what we don't need. We need not continue to bear the brutal costs of inertial structures that do not change on a whim or for corporate protection of positions and wages.

The crisis of the State is not the effect of a conjuncture, but of a historical accumulation of decades of wrong decisions that have been taken.

In the last 8 years, government spending increased twice and even triple what the population increased and much more than GDP increased.

In the private sector, prices of goods and services have been falling, quality is improving, driven by the market's own competitiveness. In the public sector, on the other hand, we have absolute and relative increases in the prices of services, which makes the equation unsustainable.

If the State is committed to maintaining the past, how does it think and execute innovative public policies? In general, it does not.

To make money and market space, companies need to reinvent themselves every day. To participate in birthdays even the elderly had to learn to use the Zoom. To serve the citizen, the State must do the same. The digital transformation of the State is an issue of the highest political priority. It's not a technology issue.

We know that the institutional reinvention of the state is difficult, but what is the alternative? Continue to suffer from an inefficient, costly and ineffective state?

This article aims to discuss the advances that took place in the years of the pandemic in solutions of citizen participation, social control, service provision and increased democratic capillarity, and the possibilities of consolidating them as levers of transformation and innovation. This could show that it is possible to react to the crisis of contemporary democracies.